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ABSTRACT

This report describes the implementation of a reverse integration and inclusion program at a school which had previously been exclusively for students with cognitive disabilities (trainable mental retardation). An extensive review of the literature provides a history of special education, mainstreaming, reverse integration, and the inclusive schools movement. The study included a survey of 30 teachers and 10 aides from the special school concerning the proposed reverse integration/inclusion effort. Results indicated that most faculty and staff had a negative opinion of the school climate following program implementation, would prefer to work with only special education students, and felt that the regular school population is noisy, rude, and disruptive and provides poor role models. Respondents felt that inclusion/integration was initiated to keep the school open without regard to teacher/staff opinion, student needs, or space considerations. However, 85 percent of respondents did feel that inclusion/integration could be successful. The Phelps School Climate Survey Questionnaire and this study's specific responses are attached. (Contains 16 references.) (DB)

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INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

Miriam A. Phelps

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The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142) assured all exceptional children the right to an education provided in the least restrictive environment. The law requires educational services for all handicapped, but not a separate educational system. Proponents of an inclusive system of education believe that change has the potential to provide a more effective education for all students; many schools have started to include special education students in their regular education population. This is the first time a special education faculty has decided to do reverse inclusion and integration. There has been a push for inclusion/integration since the school reform act. The handicapped act was reviewed and a new meaning was developed. Parents said, "I want my child educated with his or her normal peers and not in isolation." The special education classroom teachers were involved with restructuring the school to provide the least restrictive environemnt for the special education student by working with the new faculty members who would teach the regular education population.

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The purpose of this study is to determine the effect reverse integration and inclusion have had on the climate of a formerly all special education facility. The push for total inclusion will make special education facilities obsolete. Courtenay school had been a special education facility for students with cognitive disabilities (trainable mentally handicapped) since 1970. Several years ago there was a push for inclusion of special education students into regular educational settings. Schools that were isolated from the regular education population were soon to be viewed as not providing the least restrictive environment. The administration had the foresight to foresee the direction that all isolated special education faculties would be heading towards. We realize that there would be problems in adopting reverse integration and inclusion; the attitudes of the faculty would be one of the factors.

It was important that a smooth transition take place for reverse inclusion/integration to take place.

The special education program in the United States had originated during the early nineteenth century. Advocates of the established educational programs for specific handicaps pressured state legislators to pass legislation to achieve this

purpose. The earliest known school had been established in Hartford, Connecticut in 1817, by Thomas H. Gallaudet. He was the founder of the American Asylum for the education of the deaf and dumb. In 1832, New York had established a school for blind students. By 1852, New York, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts all had appropriated money for programs for mentally retarded children and classes for the physically handicapped in the public schools. Chicago had started the aforementioned in the early 1900's. By the early twentieth century, handicapped children had gained entry into the public school system.

Severely handicapped students did not attend public school because they were ill-equipped to handle students who exhibited aberrant characteristics. In 1893, a Massachusetts court had ruled that student behavior resulting from "imbecility" was grounds for expulsion. Formal classes did not exist; therefore, they had to turn to residential facilities, provide tutors, or forget education altogether. The 1918 Soldiers Rehabilitation Act passed by Congress along with the Smith-Bankhead Act, affirmed rehabilitation services in the form of job training. By the 1940's, the acts were amended to include the mentally ill and mentally retarded. In 1946, at the International Council for Exceptional Children Convention, a few outspoken human service and education experts were asking why not integrate, not segregate. (Bilken, D., 1981) He lobbyed for more integration

whenever possible. He told the audience that the child should be allowed to socialize with non-disabled peers so that he would be able to learn from them.

In the 1960's, the argument began to heat up again. A number of special education experts began to seriously question the practice of placing severely disabled students in institutions and separate schools. For example, Maynard Reynolds, a leader in the field, wrote in 1962 that "when a special placement is necessary to provide suitable care or education, it should be no more special than necessary."

In Scandinavia, meanwhile, the term "normalization" had come into vogue. Bank-Mikkelsen, a Dane, coined the term in 1959. By "normalization" he meant the right of disabled people to have opportunities to live in as normal a fashion as possible. It took less than a decade for this term to reach the United States. They learned of the concept from Bengt Nirje, another Scandinavian, who was the Executive Director of the Swedish Association for Retarded Citizens. He had come to the United States to share his views on the integration issue. The idea of Maynard Reynolds and Bengt Nirje was to make services for disabled people as normal as possible if needed all of their lives. Thus, when a group of parents in a Pennsylvania town went to court to demand the right to education for their children, they also wanted normalization. In legal terms, they

asked that their children receive education in the least restrictive setting possible. The court found in their favor.

Almost as soon as the term "least restrictive environment" entered the field of education, it sparked a debate. Some experts charged that it would lead to disaster. Albert Shanker (Alexander, K. & Alexander, D. M., 1992), a prominent teachers union leader, suggested that special education teachers would be out of work.

A significant turning point for handicapped children's rights occurred in 1971 when a federal district court ruled that retarded children in Pennsylvania were entitled to a free public education. The ruling stipulated that whenever possible, retarded children must be educated in regular classrooms rather than be segregated from the normal school population.

In 1972, Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia expanded the Pennsylvania decision to include all handicapped children. Congress passed two laws: the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals With Disabilities Act in 1975. The EAHCA has been amended several times. In 1983, the bill was amended to clarify the term "special education" as services designated "to meet the unique educational needs of the handicapped child," and specifically expanded services for deaf-blind children. The committee report supported the need to improve education for the severely

handicapped. In October of 1990, IDEA assured the right of all these children to a public shcool education. To ensure handicapped children basic educational rights, Public Law 94-142 incorporated certain tenets: (1) a free appropriate public education, (2) an indivudualized education program, (3) special education services, (4) related services, (5) due process procedures, and (6) the least restrictive environment (LRE) in which to learn.

(Alexander, K. & Alexander, D. M., 1992) P.L. 94-142 defines the issue this way: "to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public and private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not handicapped; and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily, then the child will be educated in a more restrictive environment." (p.). That environment will provide the least restrictive placement for him/her.

The questions were asked why integrate at all, and how much integration is necessary? Curriculum specialists, who develop programs for teaching children, are finding that many kinds of special education services occur best in the regular, integrated schools and communities. In 1979, the Association for the Severely Handicapped passed a resolution to end all separate

schools for the disabled. The association found that, where special classes and resource programs are often useful, indeed advantageous, these same services can be provided in the regular school so that there can also be a good deal of integration and inclusion.

Two well-known analysts of American education, Seymour Sarason and John Doris (Bilken, 1981) have said that society expects schools to accomplish two tasks: (a) to teach students how to think, and (b) to teach democracy. Many schools are better at the first task than the latter. The best way to teach democracy is to give people equal opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. In education, this means black, white, male and female, and disabled and non-disabled students going to school together. Through school integration, non-disabled and disabled students will learn to live together in society as adults.

Proponents supported the idea of autonomy at the building level with professionals involved in the decision-making process at all levels (Wang, Reynolds and Walberg, 1986). They contended that inclusion would lead to the integration of all students and better coordination of programs, resulting in a more powerful general education system. Additional proponents Haggarty and Abramson (1987), Lilly (1987, Reynolds, Wang and Walberg (1987) agreed on the issue of inclusion. They felt

teachers should be more prepared at the college level, that there should be changes in assessment practices, and that the existing categorization of students should be eliminated.

Opponents of an inclusive system (Anderlegg and Vergason, 1988), (Hallahan, Keller, McKinnery, Lloyd, and Bryan, 1988) felt that the present program services and delivery system may be flawed, although it has been effective for some students. The opponents felt that educators are not ready to establish cooperative inclusion of the handicapped or entitlement program students, that there is a strong case for intensive setting, and that instructional techniques such as directed instruction may be more easily implemented in specific rather than general settings. There is also the issue of whether regular education educators are willing to accept special education students into their programs. The other question is what effect the educational reform act will have on this initiative, but with changes come numerous implications. The existing medical model of special education needs to be changed.

Attorney Tom Gihool (Bilken, . 1981) and his colleagues at the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia discussed the developmental twin argument. They asked the question, if a child with a particular type of disability can be successfully integrated, either with special services in a regular school or in a regular class, then why cannot all children with the same

type and level of disability be similarly integrated? A survey was conducted in Madison, Wisconsin's school district, and it was concluded that, in order for inclusion and integration to work, the school must have adequate staffing, teachers must be responsible for integrating disabled and non-disabled students, and the disabled students must be viewed as individuals and not as a people defined only by their disabilities. Faculty and staff need to structure ways for disabled and non-disabled students to come into contact with each other. The faculty and staff must hold high expectations for both disabled and non-disabled students. The faculty should avoid unnatural teaching methods. The school should teach positive attitudes towards differences. These facts have led to the conclusion that inclusion and integration work.

A group of researchers in Madison, Wisconsin found that a large number of school districts have integrated schools. Information gathered on successful mainstreaming programs with the severely disabled students found the following factors make interation work with great success (Bilken, , 1981):

1) The principal must believe in integration and must share that belief with teachers and parents.

2) The teachers most responsible for integrating disabled and non-disabled students must view disabled students as individuals and not as people defined only by their disabilities.

3) The pattern of a school day for disabled students should resemble the non-disabled child's school

day. Children should arrive and leave at the same time, eat meals together, have roughly the same amount of time for recreation and academics, and so forth.

4) Children should attend schools that include children of their same age.

5) Children should be grouped in classrooms by actual age rather than by so-called developmental or mental age. While some children will need special class placement, they should be grouped with other special needs children of the same or similar age.

6) Faculty and staff need to structure ways for disabled and non-disabled students to come into contact with each other.

7) A school needs adequate staffing.

8) The most vibrant school programs seem to be those which encourage involvement of parents (of disabled and non-disabled students alike) in school program development and school decision making.

9) The school must ensure the personal safety of all students.

10) The staff and faculty must hold high expectations for both disabled and non-disabled students.

11) The faculty should avoid unnatural teaching methods which would emphasize differences of disabled students.

12) The school should make teaching positive attitudes toward differences a regular part of the curriculum.

13) Children with disabilities must have opportunities to assume leadership and helping roles to balance the more dependent roles into which they are so often placed.

Two recent reports (Roach, 1991 and Welburn, 1991) have indicated that schools must move in the direction of a holistic philosophy of education and the educational institutions need to focus on the interaction between teachers and students, valuing an array of developmental accomplishments in each and every student. The study sought to determine the current beliefs and attitudes about inclusion of all students in a school community in a midwest Colorado school district. They further investigated whether there were differences in attitudes and beliefs between district personnel in the other school districts. The results of the survey found that inclusion of the special children created too much work (fifty-three percent). Twenty-eight percent said that inclusion of the program would be detrimental to the education of other students; sixty percent of the staff said they wanted the special needs students to be included; forty-nine percent stated that inclusion was not the best way to go. Seventy-three percent did agree that the other children would accept the students with special needs. Ninety percent of the respondents said that they were not given enough time to cooperatively plan together. Seventy-seven percent concluded that inclusion had created tension within their school building; ninety-five percent of principals agreed.

A 16-item Likert-type attitude scale was used to measure attitudes toward inclusive education. The test was designed to measure specifically the physical, academic, behavioral and social aspects of inclusion. Attitudes toward inclusive education were clearly multidimensional. The results showed that teachers were most agreeable to teaching students whose disabilities did not inhibit their learning or the learning of their classmates. They indicated they were willing to make physical accommodations but would not favor making academic or behavioral accommodations. They said that the education of handicapped should be the responsibility of the regular education teacher, only to be given support by the special education teacher. They viewed the success of inclusion to be based on the problems seen by the educators in trying to include or integrate. But the school climate was not a factor in the inclusion/integration process.

In September, 1993, two teachers in the Kansas City, Missouri school system (Gorman, T. & Rose, M., 1993) volunteered to have special education students assisgned to their classrooms. They found that their class sizes had not been lowered, but had increased. They stated that, although a special education student had been assigned to each of their classrooms, there was no planning time, and it was still very difficult to meet all of the students' needs. More school

districts are pressing for full inclusion regardless of the student's disability. In a survey of the American Federation of Teachers taken last year, 70 percent said that inclusion has become a problem. Many school districts will adopt full inclusion because they believe that inclusion is required by law. In fact, inclusion is not specifically addressed in either of the two major federal laws that deal with special education: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The laws only mandate that students receive a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits institutions that receive federal aid from discriminating against individuals with disabilities, but it does not require students to be educated in regular classrooms.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), however, does call for a "continuum of alternative placement" to be made available, including regular and special classes, and special schools and institutions. (Alexander, K. & Alexander, D. M., 1992)

Other researchers, such as Robert Slavin (Gorman, T. & Rose, M., 1993) of Johns Hopkins University, have provided support for the concept of inclusion. "The important point to bear in mind is that many schools are moving aggressively toward full inclusion even though there has been no comprehensive

research to determine who benefits from the practice and under what conditions," says Beth Bader of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Educational Issues Department.

Full inclusion is not urged by The Council of Exceptional Children and the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA). They are urging schools not to cut off service options. (Gorman, T. & Rose, M., 1993) The Council for Exceptional Children stated last year that a continuum of services must be available for all children, youth and adults, and access to these programs and experiences should be based on individual needs and desired outcome.

The Learning Disabilities Association of America stated that "the regular education classroom is not the appropriate placement for a number of students with learning disabilities who may need alternative instructional environments, teaching strategies and/or materials that cannot or will not be provided within the context of a regular classroom." (Gorman, T. & Rose, M., 1993) This was stated in a position paper in 1993. The LDA believes that placement of all children with disabilities in the regular classroom is as great a violation of the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as is the placement of all children in separate classrooms on the basis of their type of disability.

Literature on the effect of the school climate on reverse inclusion/integration is scarce. However, the questionnaire will answer some of the unanswered questions. The report by Roach and Welburn (1991) indicated that teachers feel that the environment would affect the teachers' attitudes. They stated that (1) included students caused too much work, (2) the regular teacher is the one responsible, (3) teachers did not receive enough planning time to be effective, and (4) the inclusion of special education students was detrimental. Other surveys conducted by the American Federation of Teachers agreed with the aforementioned. Other studies did not focus on the personal attitudes of the teachers, but on how the teachers viewed the factors that would inhibit successful inclusion/integration. Many schools are pushing for inclusion/integration because of the way they interpret the law. Inclusion/integration will have to be decided on an individual basis.

Questions of the Study

1. What is the teacher/staff opinion of the effect of inclusion/integration on the school climate?
2. What special advantages will inclusion/integration have for the special education students?
3. What is the effect of the inclusion/integration on the special education population?
4. What is the effect of the inclusion/integration on the regular education population?

Procedures

Population

The population in this study will include 70 staff members from Courtenay Elementary School on the north side of Chicago. The population includes 40 teachers, 20 teacher aides, and 10 support staff members (janitorial and cafeteria workers). Thirty teachers and ten teacher aides will be chosen at random from the population.

The Phelps' School Climate Survey was distributed to the other teaching staff. Responses to the survey will be used to determine the effect of reverse inclusion on the school climate.

The findings will be tabulated by random sampling. The Chi Square test will be employed at the .05 level of confidence to determine the statistical significance of the findings.

Results of the Study

The problem was to determine the effect of inclusion/integration on the school climate of a formerly all special education facility. The data in the table showed that the majority of the teachers and staff have a negative opinion of the school climate. The majority felt that the school should have remained a special education facility. They would prefer to work with only special education students. They stated that the regular population is a poor role model--very noisy, rude and disruptive--in comparison to the formerly serene climate. The regular education students are also very disruptive on the school bus. Ninety percent of those responding felt that it would only be a matter of time before gang violence would be seen. They felt that inclusion/integration was only initiated to keep the school doors open, without regard to teacher/staff opinion, students' needs, or consideration for space. Eighty-five percent of the respondents did feel that, with cooperation, consistency, fairness, and a positive attitude, inclusion/integration could be successful.

Literature on teachers' opinions is very scarce. However, the literature that was presented stated that the opinions of teachers were not a major factor. The research that was compiled by the American Federation of Teachers stated that many schools had not included the staff in making decisions regarding inclusion/integratiion. The students' characteristics were not

an important factor. The classroom environment was no longer a conducive place for learning. The school climate was filled with hostility from staff and other students.

More studies need to be conducted to ascertain the effect of inclusion/integration on the school climate of a formerly all special education center. The few studies that were conducted only involved regular education schools. Other studies had concluded that preparation time and planning with staff is important when setting up an inclusion/integration program. Space should be the main priority. The regular population should be taught about differences in others in order for inclusion/integration to take place. Inclusion/integration can work if all members are included at all levels of the decision making process.

The Phelps School Climate Survey Questionnaire Responses

		Yes	No	No Opinion
1.	The term inclusion/integration is understood.	80%*	20%	-
2.	Inclusion/integration will have social advantages for the special education child.	40%	50%	10%
3.	Inclusion/Integration will be academically advantageous to the special child.	20%	70%*	10%
4.	The present special education population will be able to model after the regular educational child.	70%*	20%	10%
5.	The principal believes in integration and shares that belief with the staff.	90%*	10%	-
6.	Children with disabilities have opportunities to share leadership roles.	50%	50%	-
7.	Special education populations will make greater gains with the regular education population in the building.	35%	65%*	-
8.	The faculty is able to accommodate the regular education population.	20%	70%*	10%
9.	Regular education population will be understanding of the special child.	5%	90%*	5%
10.	The regular education population will offer support to help the special education child.	15%	75%*	10%
11.	Do you feel inclusion/integration was the best option for the school?	30%	40%	30%
12.	The number of special education students in a regular class should be limited to no more than three.	85%*	15%	-

13.	The regular education teacher should participate in planning the I.E.P.	35%	45%	20%
14.	Given a chance to work with the regular population, you would.	5%	95%*	-
15.	Do you feel that a regular education population would bring gang conflict into the school?	90%*	-	10%
16.	Do you feel inclusion/integration will necessitate a security guard?	80%*	10%	10%
17.	Do you feel that changing to a regular education facility was a good idea?	10%	85%*	5%
18.	My school is making a significant effort to make inclusion/ integration work	75%*	10%	15%
19.	Inclusion is done with a minimum of extra planning time.	15%	75%*	10%
20.	Consistency, firmness and a positive attitude by all teachers involved will help to make inclusion successful.	90%*	10%	-

*Significant at a .05 level of competence.

Teachers' Comments on the Questionnaire

1. The facility is too small to accommodate a regular and a special education population.
2. The administration is only doing this to keep the school open.
3. The special education child should not be included all day.
4. There isn't enough planning time; you have to do it or else.
5. The regular education population is loud and rude.
6. The special education students will pick up bad habits and take them home.
7. Parents liked the school because it was a safe environment for special education students.
8. Inclusion works better when children are younger; there are fewer problems and less noise.
9. There are more problems on the school bus with the regular population.

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The Phelps School Climate Survey Questionnaire

Position	Level	Experience	Gender
Teacher	Pre-school	1-7 years	Female
Ancillary	Elementary	8-15 years	Male
Other		16+ years	

Directions: The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the effect of inclusion/integration on the climate of an all special education facility.

		Yes	No	No Opinion
1.	The term inclusion/integration is understood.	1	2	3
2.	Inclusion/integration will have social advantages for the special education child.	1	2	3
3.	Inclusion/Integration will be academically advantageous to the special child.	1	2	3
4.	The present special education population will be able to model after the regular educational child.	1	2	3
5.	The principal believes in integration and shares that belief with the staff.	1	2	3
6.	Children with disabilities have opportunities to share leadership roles.	1	2	3
7.	Special education populations will make greater gains with the regular education population in the building.	1	2	3
8.	The faculty is able to accommodate the regular education population.	1	2	3
9.	Regular education population will be understanding of the special child.	1	2	3

10.	The regular education population will offer support to help the special education child.	1	2	3
11.	Do you feel inclusion/integration was the best option for the school?	1	2	3
12.	The number of special education students in a regular class should be limited to no more than three.	1	2	3
13.	The regular education teacher should participate in planning the I.E.P.	1	2	3
14.	Given a chance to work with the regular population, you would.	1	2	3
15.	Do you feel that a regular education population would bring gang conflict into the school?	1	2	3
16.	Do you feel inclusion/integration will necessitate a security guard?	1	2	3
17.	Do you feel that changing to a regular education facility was a good idea?	1	2	3
18.	My school is making a significant effort to make inclusion/ integration work	1	2	3
19.	Inclusion is done with a minimum of extra planning time.	1	2	3
20.	Consistency, firmness and a positive attitude by all teachers involved will help to make inclusion successful.	1	2	3

Additional Comments _____

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